



**Congressional
Research
Service**

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Transmittal

May 23, 2005

TO: House Judiciary Committee

ATTN: [REDACTED]

FROM: [REDACTED]

Knowledge Services Group
[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Your request for information on **cable news coverage of various news events**

As per our telephone conversation of Friday, May 20, we have reviewed transcripts available via Nexis for the 16 cable television news and discussion shows from your list. Your request cited 12 separate news events for which you were trying to determine extent of coverage on these 16 shows. We were not able to locate transcripts in Nexis for three of the shows – CNN “regular” news at 8:00 PM, Connect with Monica Crowley and Ron Reagan (MSNBC), and Fox Report with Shephard Smith (Fox News Channel). This left us with 13 cable news show and 12 events. Thus, for each of the 12 events, there were potentially 39 transcripts to review (13 shows over 3 days for each event). The total number of transcripts for all events was 468. Generally, in Nexis, transcripts for individual news shows run around 7,000-8,000 words or 13 pages of hard copy. Printing out all of the transcripts for review would have generated somewhere in the neighborhood of 6,084 pages and taken an extensive amount of time to print and then review one-by-one.

With your deadline of Monday at noon in mind, we created Nexis searches for each show and each event (using words, names, and /or terms from your list of news events) and reviewed online only the transcripts that the system identified as containing those search terms. Nexis, however, does not provide all of the transcripts in the same format. They provide the transcripts that are provided to them by whatever company creates the transcripts. CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News Channel or some company hired by them provides the electronic information to Nexis. Nexis “passes along” the transcripts. As result, some transcripts have time stamps, some do not. Some transcripts are provided for an entire show; while some transcripts for individual shows are broken up into segments with each segment provided as a separate “story” in Nexis. Also, some of the shows are more news-type shows where specific segments are presented in a certain order. Other shows are more discussion-type shows which jump around from topic to topic and do not run (feature) stories, per se. As a result, it is not always easy to determine the extent of coverage for a particular event in each show when reviewing an online transcript.

Enclosed, please find a separate table for each of your news events. An X in a cell indicates that we did not find any coverage during a show for the news event identified at the top of the table. Where we did find coverage during a particular show, we have noted the “extent” of coverage and, if possible, its general position in the show.

The enclosed material is forwarded in response to your request. Please review the contents and do not hesitate to call if I can be of further assistance.

Knowledge Services Group